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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4698
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TAGS: PEPR, ID, IS, IZ, XF
SUBJECT: INDONESIAN REACTION TO ISRAELI ATTACK ON IRAQI REACTOR

1. THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT CONDEMNED THE JUNE 8 ISRAELI AIR ATTACK ON THE IRAQI NUCLEAR INSTALLATION IN BAGHDAD. IN A FORMAL STATEMENT TO THE PRESS WEDNESDAY JUNE 10, FONMIN MOCHTAR KUSUMAATMADJA DECLARED THAT "THE UNFOUNDED ATTACK ONCE AGAIN SHOWED THAT ISRAEL COMPLETELY IGNORED INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND REGULATIONS AND HAD DELIBERATELY INCREASED TENSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST," WHICH POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN EFFORTS TO SETTLE THE LEBANON WAR HAD RECENTLY HELPED TO EASE. MOCHTAR POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THE ISRAELI AGGRESSION WILL STRENGTHEN THE UNITY AND SOLIDARITY OF ARAB COUNTRIES, "UNITY WHICH WE HAVE LONG PROCLAIMED AND WISHED FOR THEM."

2. THE ABSENCE OF ARAB UNITY HAS BEEN STRESSED IN PRESS AND PARLIAMENTARY COMMENTARY HERE AS A MAJOR FACTOR IN ARAB VULNERABILITY TO ISRAELI ACTIONS OF THIS
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SORT. INDONESIANS HAVE LONG DECRIED THE DIVISIVE IN-FIGHTING WHICH HAS WEAKENED THE ARAB POSITION AGAINST ISRAEL AND POINT TO ASEAN AS A MODEL OF REGIONAL COOPERATION THE ARABS MIGHT DO WELL TO EMULATE. AN EDITORIAL IN THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE OBSERVER TODAY COMMENTS THAT INTERNATIONAL CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL IS ALL VERY WELL BUT RATHER FUTILE UNLESS THE ARABS CAN MEND THEIR OWN FENCES IN THE FACE OF THEIR COMMON FOE. THE PAPERS ASSERTED THAT SOME ARAB COUNTRIES WERE TOO ABSORBED BY SELF-INTEREST TO DO THEIR SHARE IN HELPING TO RESOLVE THE IRAN-IRAQ DISPUTE AND CONCLUDED RATHER UNCHARITABLY THAT MANY OF THE ARAB NATIONS "HAVE MORE MONEY THAN SENSE."

3. SIMILAR VIEWS IN MORE MILDER FORM WERE EXPRESSED
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BY OTHER PAPERS INCLUDING THE MUSLIM PELITA, WHICH CALLED FOR MORE EFFICIENT CONSOLIDATION OF ARAB POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY STRENGTH. AMINUDDIN AZIZ, A MUSLIM PARLIAMENTARIAN AND FORMER AMBASSADOR TO SAUDI ARABIA, POINTED TO LIBYA AND ALGERIA AS EXAMPLES OF ARAB COUNTRIES WHO OPPOSE ISRAEL BUT HAVE HOSTILE RELATIONS WITH OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES AS WELL.

4. THE U.S. HAS COME IN FOR ITS SHARE OF CRITICISM ALTHOUGH LESS SO THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED. THE USE OF U.S.-SUPPLIED AIRCRAFT HAS BEEN UNFAVORABLY NOTED WITH SOME PAPERS THUS CONCLUDING AMERICAN CALPABILITY. AMERICAN STATEMENTS ON THE POSSIBLE VIOLATION OF ARMS SALES AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN WIDELY REPORTED, ALTHOUGH THE NORMALLY FRIENDLY TIMES PUT QUOTATION MARKS AROUND "POSSIBLE." AMINUDDIN AZIZ REMARKED THAT ONE CAN HOPE FOR AN AMERICAN

EMBARGO ON FUTURE ARMS SALES TO ISRAEL, BUT HE THOUGHT THAT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE U.S. TO CARRY THROUGH IN VIEW OF THE STRONG JEWISH LOBBY IN THE U.S. GARDNER